

Fallout

THE ROLEPLAYING GAME

ASTOUNDINGLY
AWESOME
TALES

ISSUE
NO. 3

**SHOWDOWN IN
SKULL CANYON**

BY ROBERT ADDUCCI

Bethesda®

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ENTERTAINMENT

Lead Design
Jacky Leung
Writing
Robert Adducci
Editing
Jacky Leung, Dana Folberg

Proofreading
Jacky Leung
Graphic Design
Christoph Langum
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Aituar Manas

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Project Management
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Modiphius Entertainment Ltd.

39 Harwood Rd,
London SW6 4QP, United Kingdom
info@modiphius.net
www.modiphius.net

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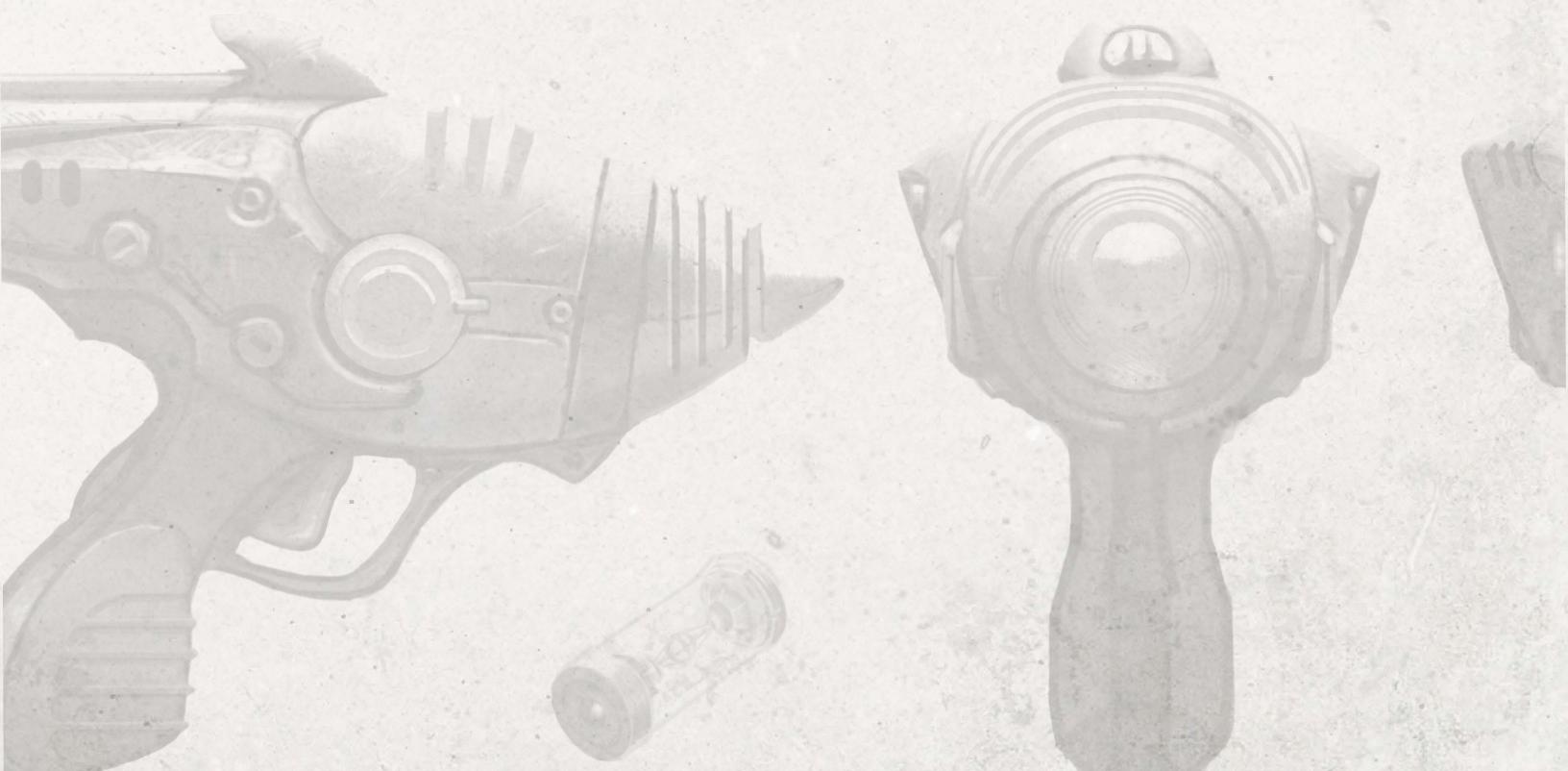
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Introduction

SHOWDOWN IN SKULL CANYON



SYNOPSIS

The mutants living in Skull Canyon have always flown under the radar—until now. In this adventure, the player characters are drawn into a conflict between the New California Republic Rangers and the seemingly peaceful mutants of Skull Canyon. Unusual activity in the area has raised the Rangers' suspicions. Unbeknownst to both the NCR Rangers and the community's human members, these "mutants" are actually Zetan aliens, who retreated to Skull Canyon after their escape from Area 51 years ago. As the PCs navigate the challenges of exploring the canyon, battling mutant rattlesnakes, conducting diplomatic talks, and deciding how they will deal with the moral questions of the alien's lies versus their survival, they will have to weigh the consequences of their actions and ultimately decide the fate of Skull Canyon's inhabitants.

- Explore the mysterious Skull Canyon and interact with its mutant inhabitants, discovering their unique language and customs.
- Investigate the growing tensions between the NCR Rangers and the mutants, gathering information on both sides of the conflict.
- Be brought before Xarn, the mutant leader, and Sally Jessup, the human liaison, who request the PCs' help in finding a peaceful resolution.
- Gather information on the NCR's activities and the unusual occurrences that attracted their attention in Skull Canyon.





GETTING INVOLVED

This scenario assumes the PCs are in the Mojave Wasteland, but the adventure should be easily adapted to other areas. There are multiple ways to get them involved:

- Doc Mitchell, a contact from New Vegas, requests the PCs' help to ease growing tensions between the NCR and the mutants. Doc was contacted by a local that lives in the canyon who suspected that the situation was near a breaking point.
- While exploring, the PCs may stumble upon Skull Canyon by chance. They may notice strange activity in the canyon or hear rumors about the mutants, prompting them to investigate further. This hook is a great way to allow the PCs to explore the world on their own terms.

- The Zetan aliens may reach out to the PCs through Sally Jessup. Sally tells the PCs that the inhabitants of Skull Canyon are fearful of the NCR's growing presence and worry that conflict is inevitable. Sally is a former caravan trader who discovered Skull Canyon by accident and was welcomed into the community.
- A PC may notice a piece of interesting tech owned by an NPC. If asked where they got it, the NPC explains it came from a small town called Skull Canyon.

Quest Level

Player characters should be level 1-5 to play through *Showdown in Skull Canyon*.

MEETING THE MUTANTS

SCENE ONE: APPROACHING THE CANYON

The player characters make their way towards Skull Canyon. As they approach the entrance, they notice the brutal terrain of the Mojave Wasteland.

ENCOUNTERING THE MUTANT GUARDS

Open this quest by reading or paraphrasing the following:

As you approach the entrance to Skull Canyon, the harsh landscape of the Mojave Wasteland surrounds you. The rugged terrain and relentless desert winds serve as a constant reminder of the unforgiving nature of this post-apocalyptic world. Nestled within the steep canyon walls sits a small town. A short wall protects the settlement from the dangers of the wastelands. Standing before the town gate are two mutant guards, their bodies wrapped in layers of thin fabric to shield them from the sun and dust.

The entrance to Skull Canyon is guarded by two “mutants” who communicate with each other in an unintelligible language. These mutants ostensibly hide themselves from the sun and desert dust in several layers of thin fabric. PCs who succeed on a **PER + Medicine** test with a difficulty of 3 note that the sun doesn’t reach this part of the canyon, but they’re wearing protective gear anyway.

Their language is completely unintelligible to the players and consists of a series of high-pitched squeals, chirps, and other strange sounds.

What if they figure it out early!?

If the players or their PCs figure out the “mutants” are really aliens before your planned reveal (see “Uncovering the Secret”), don’t sweat it. If confronted with the PCs’ discovery, Sally Jessup admits it and tells them how the community has faced discrimination and only hopes to live here peacefully. PCs can make a **PER + Speech** test with a difficulty of 2 to determine that she believes she’s telling the truth.

The PCs may attempt to communicate with the guards through gestures, drawings, and simple verbal cues. PCs who succeed on a **LCK + Speech** test with a difficulty of 3 and an increased complication range of 2 can communicate more complex ideas. Barring any complications, the mutants eventually understand and allow the PCs to enter after a brief, mostly nonverbal exchange.

If the PCs look carefully, they see each guard has a .44 Pistol and an Assault Rifle at the ready. A particularly astute PC who succeeds on a **PER + Small Guns** test with a difficulty of 4 or a **PER + Energy Weapons** test with a difficulty of 2 realize there are heavier weapons hidden under a cloth nearby. Specific weapons can’t be identified without removing the cloth, which the guards won’t appreciate. The guards only use the hidden weapons if their standard arms aren’t sufficient.

ENTERING SKULL CANYON

The PCs enter the town of Skull Canyon and meet the locals, who initially seem like ordinary mutants. PCs can interact with the following locations and events. If the PCs ask a non-mutant for information or assistance, they'll be pointed to Sally.

THE INHABITANTS

Most of the inhabitants appear to be mutants wearing light cloth covering most of their skin. Observant PCs notice the mutants' visible skin is either scaly and blue-green, or smooth and grey, and every mutant has four elongated fingers.

In addition to the mutants there are a few humans and other wasteland dwellers. None of these inhabitants appear to speak the mutants' language and instead communicate through gestures and limited verbal cues. A PC who spends time watching such interactions may attempt a **PER + Speech** test with a difficulty of 3. Success allows the player to reroll 1d20 when communicating with the Zetans in the future.

Zara'el. A slender and graceful mutant with scaly green skin has heard snippets of NCR radio chatter calling for additional supplies and reinforcements as they prepare to confront the town of Skull Canyon.

Marcus Kane. A weathered and grizzled human mercenary porting a rugged beard and a worn leather jacket overheard a conversation between two NCR troopers discussing plans to establish a new outpost in the region. Marcus can be hired as a companion for 50 caps.

William "Bill" Wilson. A tall, muscular man with short blonde hair and piercing blue eyes overheard a rumor that some NCR troopers recently went missing near Skull Canyon.



MEETING SALLY

If Sally was used as the hook, she finds the PCs while they're exploring. Otherwise, NPCs direct them to find Sally when they ask for information or assistance.

Sally Jessup is a resourceful woman with a weathered appearance, adorned with a faded red bandana that keeps her short, dirty blonde hair out of her hazel eyes. Her rugged attire, consisting of patched leather armor and sturdy boots, reflects her past life as a caravan trader. Despite her worn exterior, there is a sense of unwavering strength and loyalty in her demeanor.

Sally offers to accompany the PCs around town to serve as a translator and tour guide. She seems to be the only non-mutant capable of speaking their language. Once the PCs have explored the town, Sally takes them to the Town Hall to meet Xarn.

THE ALIEN TECH VENDOR

In the bustling marketplace, the PCs come across a vendor with quite a bit of technology. **Vexx** is a wiry figure with pale gray skin and a bald head. In addition to mundane equipment, his stall showcases strange looking fusion cells that emit an ethereal glow as well as intriguing energy weapon modifications.

While the characters browse Vexx's goods, a human (**Wastelander**) steals a Strobe Beacon from a shelf. Players may roll a **LCK + Survival** test with a difficulty of 1 to see who notices the thief. If they attempt to stop the thief, she runs. If the characters catch her and return the stolen item, Vexx is overjoyed!

Vexx guards their collection closely, but if the PCs demonstrate their trustworthiness, his demeanor softens, and they eagerly share their knowledge and offer to show the PCs the more potent and effective weaponry stored in their specialty shop behind the stall. Once in the shop, players can make a **PER + (Science or Energy Weapons)** with a difficulty of 2 to recognize that these items are likely one of a kind, but Vexx treats them somewhat casually.

WASTELANDER

*Level 2, Human,
Normal Character (17 XP)*

| S | P | E | C | I | A | L | | | |
|--|--------------------------|----------------|--------------------|---|---|---|--|--|--|
| 6 | 5 | 7 | 4 | 5 | 5 | 4 | | | |
| SKILLS | | | | | | | | | |
| Athletics | 1 | Repair | 1 | | | | | | |
| Barter | 1 | Science | | | | | | | |
| Big Guns | | Small Guns ■ | 2 | | | | | | |
| Energy Weapons | 1 | Sneak | | | | | | | |
| Explosives | | Speech | 1 | | | | | | |
| Lockpick | | Survival ■ | 2 | | | | | | |
| Medicine | | Throwing | | | | | | | |
| Melee Weapons | 2 | Unarmed | 1 | | | | | | |
| Pilot | | | | | | | | | |
| HP | INITIATIVE | | DEFENSE | | | | | | |
| 9 | 10 | | 1 | | | | | | |
| CARRY WEIGHT | MELEE BONUS | | LUCK POINTS | | | | | | |
| 200 lbs. | 0 | | — | | | | | | |
| PHYS. DR | ENERGY DR | RAD. DR | POISON DR | | | | | | |
| 1 (Arms, Legs, Torso) | 1 (Arms, Legs, Torso) | 0 | 0 | | | | | | |
| ATTACKS | | | | | | | | | |
| ■ UNARMED STRIKE: STR + Unarmed (TN 7), 2 ⚡ Physical damage | | | | | | | | | |
| ■ MACHETE: STR + Melee Weapons (TN 8), 3 ⚡ Piercing 1 Physical damage | | | | | | | | | |
| ■ DOUBLE-BARRELED SHOTGUN: AGI + Small Guns (TN 7), 5 ⚡ Spread, Vicious Physical damage, Range C, Inaccurate, Two-handed | | | | | | | | | |
| SPECIAL ABILITIES | | | | | | | | | |
| ■ NONE | | | | | | | | | |
| INVENTORY | | | | | | | | | |
| Road Leathers, Double-Barreled Shotgun, Wealth 1 | | | | | | | | | |

Vexx's Stall

Available items

| ITEM | COST |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| Deluxe Toolkit | 150 |
| Flashlight | 100 |
| Holo Tape Player | 250 |
| Lantern | 15 |
| Multi-tool | 100 |
| Radio | 75 |
| Robot Repair Kit | 48 |
| Shock Baton | 30 |
| Stun Baton | 45 |
| Weapon Mods (Complexity 3 or less) | Varies (see <i>Fallout: The Roleplaying Game Core Rulebook</i> , Chapter 4: Equipment) |

Speciality Shop Items

| ITEM | COST |
|---|--|
| Epoxy | 50 |
| Nanobot Repair Kits | 200 |
| Biogel | 60 |
| Robot Mods (Rarity 3 or less) | Varies (see <i>Fallout: The Roleplaying Game Core Rulebook</i> , Chapter 4: Equipment) |
| Any Rarity 3 or less Robot Mod as a standalone device | Double the listed price in <i>Fallout: The Roleplaying Game Core Rulebook</i> , Chapter 4: Equipment |



ALIEN CONSUMABLES

| ITEM | HP HEALED | OTHER EFFECTS | IRRADIATED? | WEIGHT | COST | RARITY |
|--------|-----------|---|-------------|--------|------|--------|
| Biogel | 5 | — | — | 1 | 60 | 4 |
| Epoxy | — | Reduces difficulty of Repair tests by 1 | — | <1 | 50 | 4 |

BIOGEL

A small, spherical container filled with a translucent gel-like substance that emits a soft blue glow. When applied to wounds or injuries on a character's body, the gel adheres to the skin and releases soothing, regenerative energy. It accelerates the healing process, sealing wounds and mending broken bones with remarkable speed, providing immediate relief and restoring vitality to the individual.

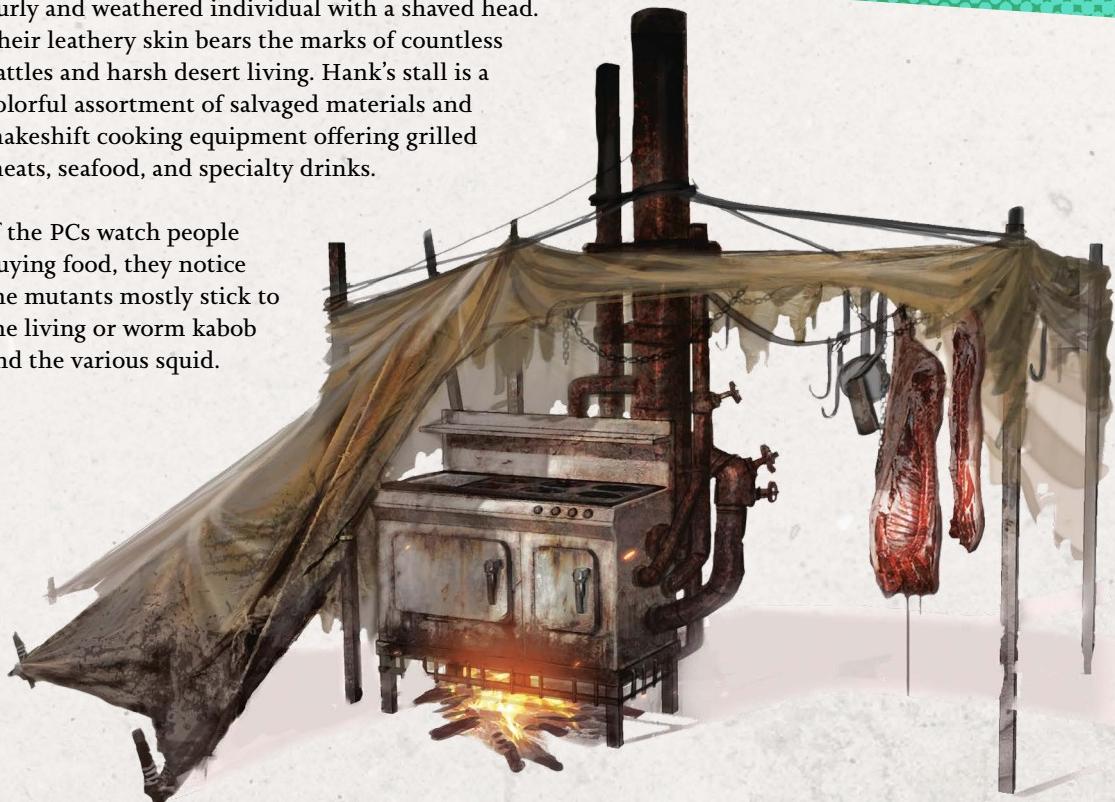
EPOXY

A syringe-like device filled with a thick, metallic silver substance. It has a retractable needle tip and a small control panel on its side. When applied to damaged surfaces, the epoxy quickly hardens into a durable, glossy coating, effectively sealing and restoring the item to its original condition.

HAPPY HANK'S FOOD VENDOR

The mutant food vendor is **Hungry Hank**, a burly and weathered individual with a shaved head. Their leathery skin bears the marks of countless battles and harsh desert living. Hank's stall is a colorful assortment of salvaged materials and makeshift cooking equipment offering grilled meats, seafood, and specialty drinks.

If the PCs watch people buying food, they notice the mutants mostly stick to the living or worm kabob and the various squid.



FOOD

| ITEM | HP HEALED | OTHER EFFECTS | IRRADIATED? | WEIGHT | COST | RARITY |
|----------------------|-----------|---|-------------|--------|------|--------|
| Living "mutant" worm | 5 | Add 1 AP to the group pool | N | <1 | 10 | 1 |
| Worm kabob | 7 | — | N | <1 | 10 | 1 |
| Squid Calamari | 3 | — | 1 Rad | <1 | 5 | 1 |
| Stuffed Squid | 6 | — | 1 Rad | <1 | 8 | 1 |
| Mutant Rattler Meat | 10 | — | 1 Rad | 1 | 20 | 3 |
| Grilled Rattler | 12 | May re-roll 1d20 on all AGI tests until end of next scene | N | <1 | 60 | 3 |
| Radroach Meat | 4 | — | 1 Rad | <1 | 3 | 0 |
| Grilled Radroach | 5 | — | | <1 | 7 | 1 |

DRINKS

| ITEM | HP HEALED | OTHER EFFECTS | IRRADIATED? | WEIGHT | COST | RARITY |
|--|-----------|---|-------------|--------|------|--------|
| Skull Canyon Shot (Liquid from a Power cell mixed with Vodka) | 4 | Alcoholic, +3 Radiation damage resistance, Lasting | 1 Rad | <1 | 20 | 1 |
| Mutant Rattler Venom Shot | 0 | +3 to Poison damage resistance | 1 Rad | <1 | 25 | 2 |
| Irradiated Blood | 3 | Roll 2 🎲 rather than 1 for determining Radiation damage when consumed | 1 Rad | <1 | 50 | 2 |
| Dirty Water | 2 | — | 1 Rad | <1 | 5 | 0 |
| Beer | 0 | Alcoholic | 1 Rad | 1 | 5 | 1 |
| Whiskey | 0 | Alcoholic, Reroll up to two d20 on STR tests (in total) | — | 1 | 5 | 3 |





MEETING XARN

Inside the Town Hall, you see mutants free of their cloth wrappings.

Sally approaches a tall and lanky mutant, their scaly blue skin glistening under the lights. Their body is slender, with elongated limbs that move with a graceful fluidity. Large, bulbous eyes peer out from their hairless and elongated head. Their four-fingered hands possess an unusual delicacy. Sally introduces the mutant as Xarn the mayor of Skull Canyon. Xarn, clad in simple and practical garments exudes an aura of both mystery and wisdom, their presence commanding the respect and reverence from the other mutants in the room.

Sally translates Xarn's speech, revealing if she hasn't already that she understands the language. Once introductions are made the group is invited into a private meeting room. There Sally explains the history of Skull Canyon, emphasizing the peaceful coexistence between mutants and humans in the community. She expresses Xarn's concerns about growing tensions with the NCR, threatening their way of life, sharing the following:

- The town of Skull Canyon has been for some time. No one is sure how long. The mutant inhabitants have been peaceful, only using violence when attacked.
- One week ago, a patrol of NCR Rangers came into town and started causing trouble. They were expelled but threatened to return.
- They seemed to be prejudiced against the mutants, shouting slurs, and manhandling several townsfolk.
- The town guard managed to turn the unit away.

If a PC succeeds on a **PER + Speech** test with a difficulty of X, they detect some falsehoods and misdirection in Sally's words. The NCR Rangers did seem prejudiced but refrained from shouting slurs. The guard expelled the Rangers using an advanced stun grenade, which Sally doesn't share.

Xarn and Sally request the PCs' help resolving the situation with the NCR. They suggest the PCs approach an NCR Ranger unit that has been spotted in a camp not far from Skull Canyon. If the PCs accept, proceed to Scene 2. If they choose to investigate Skull Canyon further, refer back to *The Inhabitants* section (page 7) for a list of NPCs with useful intel.

SCENE TWO: APPROACHING THE RANGERS

The PCs come across a New California Republic patrol led by Ranger Sergeant Jackson, who has been sent to investigate the unusual activities in Skull Canyon and confront the mutants.

ENCOUNTER 1A: DESERT LIFE

On the way to find the NCR, the PCs are attacked by four giant two-headed rattlesnakes colloquially known as **Twinjaw Rattlers**.

Twinjaw Rattler

Level 5, Mutated Reptile,
Normal Creature (45 XP)

| BODY | MIND | MELEE | GUNS | OTHER |
|----------|-----------|------------|-----------|---------|
| 6 | 5 | 4 | — | 2 |
| HP | | INITIATIVE | | DEFENSE |
| 16 | | 13 | | 1 |
| PHYS. DR | ENERGY DR | RAD. DR | POISON DR | |
| — | — | 2 (All) | Immune | |

ATTACKS

- BITE: BODY + Melee (TN 10), 4 🌻 Persistent (Poison) Physical damage**

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- FAST MOVEMENT:** The Twinjaw Rattler is incredibly agile and fast. It gains a +2 bonus to Initiative (included).
- TWIN HEADS:** The snake has two heads that can act independently, allowing it to make two bite attacks in a single turn if it chooses.
- IMMUNE TO POISON:** The Twinjaw Rattler reduces all Poison damage suffered to 0 and cannot suffer any damage or effects from poison.

APPROACHING THE NCR PATROL

The PCs come across a New California Republic patrol led by Ranger Sergeant Jackson, who has been sent to investigate the unusual activities in Skull Canyon and confront the mutants.

The PCs can choose to engage the patrol, attempt to negotiate with them, or report back to the mutants.

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- BIG:** The Twinjaw Rattler is bigger than most characters. The creature receives an additional +1 health point per Level, but its Defense is reduced by 1, to a minimum of 1. Further, it only suffers a Critical Hit if an attack inflicts 7+ damage (after damage resistance) in a single hit, rather than the normal 5+.
- DEATH RATTLE:** Once, during combat, the rattlesnake may shake its death rattle as a minor action. The rattler gains the stun damage effect on its bit for that turn.

INVENTORY

- BUTCHERY:** Scavengers can butcher a dead Twinjaw Rattler with a successful END + Survival test with a difficulty of 1. This yields 2 🌻 portions of Twinjaw Rattler meat and 2 common materials. If an Effect is rolled, it also yields 1 giant-two-headed rattlesnake fang (Machete), or a poison sack (2 ammo of Rattler venom) if two Effects are rolled.

As the PCs approach the camp, they notice that the NCR patrol has set up a series of traps and ambush points, making a stealthy approach challenging. The traps include tripwires, pit traps, and landmines, and the PCs must succeed on AGI + Athletics or PER + Survival test with a difficulty of 1 to safely navigate the area or take 2  Physical Damage and alert the Ranger unit to their presence.

THE RANGER UNIT

The NCR Rangers are a diverse group, each with their own unique skills and personalities. Read or paraphrase:

Inside the NCR Rangers' camp, a diverse group of individuals perform routine military camp duties. One man stands tall and authoritative, with a square jaw and a stern expression, reflecting a no-nonsense demeanor. Another displays a weathered face and a salt-and-pepper beard of a seasoned veteran. A confident woman cleans her sniper rifle, while a slight man inventories a medical kit. A tall bald soldier with a scar across his face sharpens a machete.

Sergeant Jackson is a commanding figure. His graying hair is neatly cropped, and his uniform is adorned with insignias denoting his rank and experience. Jackson's hard gaze reflects his years of experience as a battle-hardened leader, and his imposing presence demands respect from both his subordinates and adversaries alike. He has seen the worst of the Mojave Wasteland and is determined to protect his people at all costs, even if it means sacrificing innocent lives.

Corporal Thompson is a gruff man. He has a shaved head and a salt-and-pepper beard, giving him a stern appearance. Thompson is the backbone of the unit, leading by example and providing guidance to his fellow Rangers. He serves as Jackson's second-in-command and acts as a calming influence on the rest of the patrol.

Specialist Granger is a tall, wiry woman with piercing blue eyes, a no-nonsense attitude, and a chip on her shoulder. She carries a precision sniper rifle.

Private Nguyen is a slight man with a youthful face and a perpetually worried expression. His technical medical kit is never far from his side. The Private struggles to reconcile his humanitarian ideals with the brutal realities of the wasteland.

Private Aurelius is an imposing figure, his machete always within reach. Unknown to his unit mates, he secretly infiltrated the NCR on behalf of the Legion. Mark is a skilled fighter and marksman, but his true loyalty lies with the Legion and its mission to conquer the Mojave. He sees the conflict in Skull Canyon as an opportunity to sow chaos and weaken the NCR's hold on the region. If the PCs can uncover Mark's true identity, they may be able to turn the tables on the Legion's plans and gain an advantage in the final showdown.

The unit is filled out with five additional Privates.

Playing the Rangers

All of the rangers are flawed individuals. Play up their flaws so the PCs do not overly sympathize with them and their righteous, if misguided, rage. The goal is for the PCs to have a hard choice to make in Act 3.

Some of the rangers, especially the named officers, are also equipped with additional or specialized gear. We encourage GMs to implement these modifications if a play group wishes to have increased tactical expression from the Rangers.

- **Sergeant Jackson** is a Notable NCR Trooper and equipped with Combat Armor Leg x2, and Combat Armor Arm x2.
- **Corporal Thompson** has 4 ranks in Big Guns and is equipped with a Minigun.
- **Specialist Granger** has 4 ranks in Energy Weapons and is equipped with a Sniper Laser Rifle (Sniper Barrel, Marksman's Stock, Recon Scope).
- **Private Nguyen** has 4 ranks in Medicine and 5 ranks in Science.
- **Private Aurelius** is equipped with a Sword.



NCR TROOPER

*Level 7, Human,
Normal Creature (52 XP)*

| S | P | E | C | I | A | L |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 5 | 6 | 5 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 4 |

| SKILLS | | | | | | |
|----------------|---|--------------|---|--|--|--|
| Athletics ■ | 2 | Repair | 1 | | | |
| Barter | | Science | | | | |
| Big Guns | 2 | Small Guns ■ | 3 | | | |
| Energy Weapons | | Sneak | 1 | | | |
| Explosives | | Speech | 1 | | | |
| Lockpick | | Survival | 2 | | | |
| Medicine | 1 | Throwing | 1 | | | |
| Melee Weapons | 2 | Unarmed | 1 | | | |
| Pilot | | | | | | |

| HP | INITIATIVE | DEFENSE |
|----|------------|---------|
| 12 | 13 | 1 |

| CARRY WEIGHT | MELEE BONUS | LUCK POINTS |
|--------------|-------------|-------------|
| 200 lbs. | — | — |

| PHYS. DR | ENERGY DR | RAD. DR | POISON DR |
|---------------------------------|------------------------------------|---------|-----------|
| 2 (Head, Torso) (Arms, Legs) | 2 (Head, Torso); 1 (Arms, Legs) | 0 | 0 |

| ATTACKS |
|---|
| ■ UNARMED STRIKE: STR + Unarmed (TN 6), 2 ⚔ Physical damage |
| ■ 10MM PISTOL: AGI + Small Guns (TN 10), 4 ⚔ Physical damage, Fire Rate 2, Range C, Close Quarters, Reliable |
| ■ GUN BASH: STR + Melee Weapons (TN 7), 3 ⚔ Physical damage, Stun, Two-Handed |
| ■ COMBAT KNIFE: STR + Melee Weapons (TN 7), 3 ⚔ Piercing Physical damage |
| ■ COMBAT RIFLE: AGI + Small Guns (TN 10), 5 ⚔ Physical damage, Fire Rate 2, Range M, Two-Handed |

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **LET RIP:** Once per combat, the NCR Trooper may ‘let rip’ with a volley from either their 10mm Pistol or their Combat Rifle. In either case, this adds the weapon’s Fire Rate of 2 to the weapon’s damage for a single attack (for 6 ⚔ total for the 10mm Pistol, or for 7 ⚔ for the Combat Rifle).

INVENTORY

Military Fatigues, Combat Armor Helmet, Combat Armor Chest Piece, 10mm Pistol, Combat Rifle, Combat Knife, Wealth 2

ENGAGING THE PATROL

Once they’ve found the camp, the PCs must decide how to proceed.

Surveillance. If the PCs choose to surveil the NCR unit, they may attempt AGI + Sneak tests with a difficulty of 2 to avoid being spotted. A PC who has avoided detection may make an INT + Science test with a difficulty of 3 to notice useful information.

Negotiations. If the PCs choose to negotiate with the NCR, they must first overcome Ranger Sergeant Jackson’s stubbornness and mistrust of outsiders. To convince him to share information, the PCs must navigate a series of CHA + Speech tests with a difficulty of 2. For each success, the Rangers share one piece of useful information.

Combat. If the PCs choose to fight the patrol directly, they must contend with the skilled and well-equipped NCR Rangers. PCs are unlikely to learn much useful information during combat but may discover notes containing energy readings or Ranger suspicions after the fact.





NCR INFORMATION

The PCs can learn the following information during this scene.

- The NCR patrol has been sent to investigate the disappearance of two NCR privates who went missing in the area last week. The Rangers believe the mutants to be at fault.
- Private Nguyen's equipment has picked up strange energy readings from a mysterious underground location in Skull Canyon.

- Private Aurelius suspects the mutants are using their advanced tech to mind control their human neighbors.

A deserter NCR trooper named Brown has been seen nearby, and Jackson wants to catch him.

There are rumors of Legion spies in the area. A PC who succeeds on a **PER + Speech** test with a difficulty of 1 notices Private Aurelius reacting nervously to hearing the news.

If the players don't unlock the information through tests, allow the information to come out during the conversation or investigation as needed.

UNCOVERING THE SECRET

Depending on what information the PCs obtained, the evidence of the mutants' true nature as Zetan aliens can be discovered with a little investigation. However, this scene doesn't have to happen. If the PCs don't have a reason to suspect them, they don't have to investigate.

EVIDENCE

Evidence could take many forms, such as the discovery of the power cell factory below ground, an alien who reveals their identity to the PCs, or Zetans possession of advanced technological abilities, including energy weapons and advanced medical technology.

Through conversations, finding documents, or other evidence the PCs can learn the following about the Zetans history.

A large contingent of the Zetans escaped form a facility called Area 51 generations ago.

- Some of the aliens were found or were guided here by others of their kind.
- Much of the technology was scavenged from downed alien spacecraft or looted back from the Area 51 site at great risk.
- Having all they needed they begin to create alien power and technology.

Homing Beacon

A critical success during the investigation discovers evidence of an alien homing device. It's not clear what the device does, but if questioned Xarn or Nok say that when their alien brothers one day return, they'll be able to teleport back up to their ships to return home. Whether this is true or the precursor to a Zetan invasion is beyond the scope of this quest.

POWER CELL FACTORY

In order to find the Power Cell Factory, the PCs need to learn that there are more caves underground. They could learn this from Hungry Hank or Bill Wilson in a conversation. If the PCs want to snoop around, have them make **AGI + Sneak** tests difficulty 3 to notice several mutants going into a large building that butts up to the cliff sides. Additionally, a **PER + Survival** test with a difficulty of 3 allows them to notice a cleverly concealed air vent on the canyon top. A **STR + Athletics** test with a difficulty of 4 can open or break it.

As you cautiously enter the massive industrial chamber, you are immediately struck by the sight before you. The machinery and devices within this factory are unlike anything you have ever seen before. The materials used are unfamiliar and have a distinct iridescent sheen, reflecting the ambient light in mesmerizing patterns. The energy cores pulsate with an otherworldly glow, casting a surreal illumination on the surroundings. Strange symbols and intricate circuitry cover every surface, forming intricate patterns that defy human understanding. This is no ordinary factory; it is a testament to advanced and alien technology, hinting at a civilization far beyond our own.

The characters can find a number of artifacts to help them prove what they now know that the "mutants" are aliens. A sheaf of paper written in an alien language. An alien tool that is unknown to the PCs.



ALIENS UNVEILED

Once they are suspicious, if the PCs carefully watch any of the mutants, they can pick up on some odd indications including their penchant for staying out of the sun, their strange language, and their odd eating habits—eating only worms or squid. Additional details can be found through careful study and a successful **PER + Medicine** test with a difficulty of 2. These details include:

- There don't seem to be any children in the canyon, aside from one or two obvious humans.
- There don't seem to be any elderly people, aside from a few obvious humans.

Armed with these pieces of information the PCs may confront the mutants or Sally.

Vexx. The tech merchant will be truthful with the characters since they likely helped him with the thief.

Zara'el. She can be convinced to tell her secret with a successful **CHA + Speech** with a difficulty of 2 or **STR + Speech** with a difficulty of 1.

Xarn. They resist admitting to his alien nature unless the characters seem sympathetic, or they successfully threaten him with a **STR + Speech** test with a difficulty of 2.

Sally Jessup. Sally denies that the mutants are aliens, no matter what evidence she is shown or explained. This intense denial may make the PCs suspicious, but she appears to be telling the truth as she knows it. Only by restraining her and finding a strange medical port on the back of her skull can the PCs realize she is not in control of herself. Of course, doing this alerts Xarn of the characters' actions.



ADVANCED WEAPONRY OR MEDICAL TECHNOLOGY

If Vexx is questioned about the nature of his technology, he insists that they were found and fixed by the community. If heavily questioned with a **CHA + Speech** test difficulty 3 he can be persuaded to divulge that the technology is made here in Skull Canyon. However, if Vexx is persuaded through his love of technology with a **CHA + Science** test with a difficulty of 1, he eventually overexplains how the items are made underground in the canyon.

If the PCs are asking about weaponry or advanced medical technology around town, Sarah Miller hears about it and introduces herself to the PCs. She explains how when the NCR Rangers started causing trouble, they were hit with several energy grenades that stunned them. They were then taken outside the city limits and dumped. If asked if she can get any of the grenades, she says she thinks the weapon vendor Vexx likely has some, but he won't talk to her.

Sarah Miller can also recount seeing a heavily injured mutant being taken into a cliffside building and then walking out the next day fit as a fiddle.

Stepping into the seemingly ordinary hospital, you are greeted by the familiar sight of sterile white corridors and bustling medical staff. Yet, as you venture deeper, subtle anomalies emerge. The staff's strange language echoes through the halls, their uniforms adorned with enigmatic symbols. Patient rooms reveal advanced technology humming with alien energy, from hovering diagnostic devices to chambers filled with pulsating healing liquid. Finally, a hidden chamber unveils cryogenic pods housing preserved bodies, confirming that this is no ordinary hospital, but extraterrestrial in nature.

DECISIONS, DECISIONS

With the discovery of the Zetans' true identity, the PCs must now decide how to resolve the conflict between the mutants and the NCR. They could attempt to negotiate a peaceful resolution, leveraging their knowledge of the Zetans' true nature to convince the NCR to stand down. Alternatively, they may choose to side with the Zetans and engage in open conflict with the NCR, risking further escalation of tensions and potentially deadly consequences.

Act Two

NAVIGATING THE CONFLICT

SYNOPSIS

In Act Two, the PCs delve deeper into the conflict between the NCR and the Zetans in Skull Canyon. The NCR patrol moves to confront the “mutants” in Skull Canyon. The PCs must decide whether to intervene or let events unfold. During the conflict, a nest of two-headed giant rattlesnakes is disturbed, attacking both the NCR and the Zetans. The PCs must deal with the snake threat and decide whether to use the chaos to their advantage or help one of the factions. They can begin to diffuse the situation or bring it to new heights depending on their choices and allegiances.

Over the course of Act Two, the PCs have the opportunity to:

- Encounter the dangerous nest of two-headed giant rattlesnakes.
- Discover more about the Rangers’ motivations.
- Uncover a hidden Zetan laboratory where experiments are conducted, revealing their true nature and intentions.
- Discover hard evidence of a third party’s involvement, such as the Enclave, the Brotherhood of Steel, or the Legion, manipulating the conflict between the NCR and the “mutants.”
- Unearth the motivations and agendas of key NPCs, such as Sally Jessup and Captain Jackson, uncovering their roles in the conflict and their true loyalties.



AWASH WITH CONFLICT

The PCs are awakened by one of their friends in the town, or Sally. They're informed that the Rangers and a group of Skull Canyon folk are in a confrontation in a nearby wash.

As the PCs arrive at the site of the confrontation, they witness a group of NCR Rangers standing off against a group of Skull Canyon townsfolk consisting six **zetans** and two **wastelanders**.

Apparently, Private Ramirez of the NCR unit's Rangers is missing and the NCR blames the Zetans. The NCR Rangers are led by Sergeant Jackson, are determined to rid the area of the threat. In particular, Private Aurelias stalks around brandishing his weapons in the faces of the Zetans, attempting to provoke them.

- **Supporting the NCR:** If the PCs choose to support the NCR, they must fight alongside the Rangers to defeat the Zetans. As the battle rages on, the PCs may encounter Zetans who are more heavily armed and armored than the mutants encountered before. Questioning a captured Zetan could lead to learning that the Zetans are at a minimum spying on and kidnapping NCR troopers. This discovery could lend credibility to the NCR's concerns about the aliens and make it more difficult for the PCs to broker a peaceful resolution.
- **Supporting the Zetans:** If the PCs choose to support the Zetans, they are tasked with fighting off the NCR Rangers.
- **Remaining Neutral:** If the PCs choose to remain neutral, they may try to defuse the situation by negotiating with both sides or escaping Skull Canyon altogether. Encounter 2: Snakes in a Wash

Regardless of what the players choose all the activity has riled up a nest of twenty-five **twinjaw rattlers**. At a particularly tense moment, the rattlers stream out of holes in the ground and from beneath rock overhangs. A PC who succeeds on a **PER + Survival** test with a difficulty of 1 notices evidence of shed snakeskin nearby, alerting them to the presence of twinjaw rattlers. Anyone who failed is surprised and the target of a twinjaw rattler attack on the first round of combat. As the snakes stream out of the dens, chaos erupts from those present.

Read or paraphrase:

The tension in the wash is shattered as the ground beneath your feet trembles, and a chorus of rattling fills the air. Suddenly, a writhing mass of enormous snakes emerges from the ground and from beneath a stone ledge, their two heads hissing and baring venomous fangs. The twinjaw rattlers, disturbed by the commotion, emerge and strike at anything in their path. Panic ensues as the NCR Rangers and Zetans scramble to defend themselves against the onslaught of these monstrous creatures. The PCs must quickly decide whether to join the fray, taking advantage of the chaos, or find a way to escape the deadly fangs of the twinjaw rattlers.

After the combat with the tension spent the two groups go their separate ways to nurse their wounds.



THE LONE WOLF

On their way back to Skull Canyon the PCs are stopped by an enigmatic figure on a hill when he shouts down to the characters.

On your way back to Skull Canyon when you are not near the Zetans, you're stopped by an enigmatic figure crouching atop a rock outcropping higher on a hill. With a mix of defiance and desperation, the man calls out to you. His voice laced with a blend of anger and weariness. "Hold it right there! I've been watching you, and I can see you're not like those NCR lackeys. You've got the look of rebels in your eyes, rebels who know the truth. Listen, I don't want your help, but I need to warn you about those aliens. I've seen it firsthand, NCR troopers being abducted, and taken to their lair in the old abandoned mine to the east. I'd bet they're conducting experiments on them. God knows what they're up to. Don't trust the NCR, but watch your backs, because those aliens are far from innocent. That's all I'm gonna say. Now get out of here before they find me."

Disillusioned and angry at the NCR, **Corporal Brown**, is a trooper who has gone rogue. He is dangerous and unpredictable and is willing to do whatever it takes to achieve his goals. The lone wolf doesn't trust anyone, but he trusts the NCR even less than most. While he hates the NCR, he also doesn't want to see innocent troopers experimented on by the Zetans. Thus, his willingness to talk with the characters.

Brown feels betrayed by the NCR due to their perceived corruption, negligence, and disregard for the well-being of their own troopers. Brown witnessed instances of high-ranking officials prioritizing their own interests over the lives of their subordinates and was personally affected by the NCR's failure to provide adequate support to their troopers. These events fueled his resentment, motivating him to go rogue in order to seek justice and expose the NCR's dark secrets.

INVESTIGATING THE RANGERS' MOTIVATION

The PCs may feel compelled to explore the recent unusual activities that sparked the Ranger's suspicion, such as unexplained disappearances in the area.

UNCOVERING COMPLEX SECRETS

As the PCs explore the area around the Skull Canyon, they uncover clues that lead them to a Zetan complex hidden deep beneath the surface with entrances from the Zetan Hospital or the old mine to the east. Backtracking over their previous discoveries does little to help them find the complex, with the exception of the hospital or speaking with Sarah Miller or Bill Wilson.

The complex is a maze of narrow corridors and strange machinery, with flickering lights and the hum of powerful generators.

The PCs must contend with security systems and drones. First, as the characters approach the mine entrance or the connected hospital entrance, they must succeed on an **AGI + Sneak** group test with a difficulty of 4. Alternatively, the PCs may infiltrate the facility with an **INT + Science** group test (to hack into the security system) or an **INT + Repair** group test (to disassemble cameras and other detection devices).

Success gets the PCs into the complex unseen or unnoticed.

Failure alerts the Zetans to the security breach, but there are no klaxons ringing in alarm, just a unit of security drones. The characters are assaulted by a group of **four security drones**. Every 10 minutes, another unit of four security drones finds and assaults the PCs.

Security Drone, Protectron

Level 3, Robot,

Normal Creature (24 XP)

| BODY | MIND | MELEE | GUNS | OTHER |
|----------|-----------|------------|-----------|---------|
| 5 | 5 | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| HP | | INITIATIVE | | DEFENSE |
| 8 | | 10 | | 1 |
| PHYS. DR | ENERGY DR | RAD. DR | POISON DR | |
| 4 (All) | 4 (All) | Immune | Immune | |

ATTACKS

- **CLAWS: BODY + Melee (TN 7),**
3 ⚡ Physical damage
- **ARM LASERS: BODY + Guns (TN 7),**
3 ⚡ Burst, Piercing 1 Energy damage, Range C,
Fire Rate 4
- **SELF DESTRUCT: BODY + Melee (TN 7),**
6 ⚡ Physical damage, Blast

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **ROBOT:** The Protectron is a robot. They are immune to the effects of starvation, thirst, and suffocation. They are also immune to Poison and Radiation damage. However, machines cannot use food and drink or other consumables, they do not heal naturally, and the Medicine skill cannot be used to heal them: damage to them must be repaired (*Fallout: The Roleplaying Game*, p.34).
- **IMMUNE TO POISON:** The Poison damage suffered to 0 and cannot suffer any damage or effects from poison.
- **IMMUNE TO RADIATION:** The Protectron reduces all Radiation damage suffered to 0 and cannot suffer any damage or effects from radiation.
- **IMMUNE TO DISEASE:** The Protectron is immune to the effects of all diseases, and they will never suffer the symptoms of any disease.

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **ARM LASERS:** If one of a Protectron's arms suffers an injury, the Fire Rate of its Arm Lasers decreases to 2. If both its arms are injured, it can no longer attack with its Arm Lasers.
- **LET RIP:** Once per combat, the Protectron may 'let rip' with a volley from their Arm Lasers. This adds the weapon's Fire Rate of 4 to the weapon's damage for a single attack (for 7 ⚡ total) and allows them to use the Burst damage effect without spending ammo. If one of the Protectron's Arm Lasers is injured, this special attack decreases to 5 ⚡ damage.
- **SELF-DESTRUCT:** If both of a Protectron's arms are injured, or it has been reduced to half or fewer of its maximum HP, it will move towards the nearest enemy and use its major action to self-destruct. This self-destruct is an attack centered upon itself and destroys the Protectron after it attempts this attack.

INVENTORY

- **SALVAGE:** Scavengers can salvage from a destroyed Protectron with a successful INT + Science test with a difficulty of 1. This yields 2 ⚡ units of common materials with +1 ⚡ per AP spent, and each Effect yields 1 uncommon materials.



INSIDE THE LAB

Inside the PCs discover:

- Evidence of the Zetans' experiments on people, three on experimental tables, none of them Ramirez. If the PCs made it in without being noticed, there are three **Zetans** experimenting on the humans overseen by **Nok, the chief Zetan scientist**. Nok quickly steps into another room, protected by bullet and laserproof glass to show up later in the adventure. If the players managed to sneak in, then they see Nok and the three **Zetans** walking down an adjacent hallway through the glass.
- Recordings of brain scans, physiological tests, and psychological evaluations revealing their interests in human emotion and behavior.

SUPER MUTANT

*Level 5, Mutated Human,
Normal Character (38 XP)*

| S | P | E | C | I | A | L |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 9 | 5 | 7 | 4 | 4 | 5 | 4 |

| SKILLS | | | | | | |
|----------------|-----|------------|---|---|--|--|
| Athletics | | Repair | | | | |
| Barter | | Science | | | | |
| Big Guns | 1 | Small Guns | 3 | | | |
| Energy Weapons | | Sneak | | | | |
| Explosives | | Speech | | | | |
| Lockpick | | Survival | ■ | 3 | | |
| Medicine | | Throwing | | | | |
| Melee Weapons | ■ 4 | Unarmed | | 2 | | |
| Pilot | | | | | | |

| HP | INITIATIVE | DEFENSE |
|----|------------|---------|
| 12 | 10 | 1 |

| CARRY WEIGHT | MELEE BONUS | LUCK POINTS |
|--------------|-------------|-------------|
| 240 lbs. | +2 | — |

| PHYS. DR | ENERGY DR | RAD. DR | POISON DR |
|----------|-----------|---------|-----------|
| 2 (All) | 2 (All) | 0 | 0 |

They find Private Ramirez in an energy cage with some strange aggressive abomination of an alien-human hybrid in another cage. A successful **Int + Science** with a difficulty of 3 deactivates the NCR trooper's cage, while a failed roll deactivates the trooper's and the **abomination's** cage.

- Evidence that the Zetans created the twinjaw rattlers in an attempt to make living guards.
- Sally Jessup, who is revealed to be one of the Zetans' experiments. Sally has been augmented with Zetan technology, giving her enhanced physical abilities and a deeper understanding of the aliens' motivations and objectives. While in this groggy plugged in state Sally can answer truthfully if slowly. Succeeding on an **Int + Science** with a difficulty of 5 removes the Zetan's hold on her permanently, while 4 successes grant her autonomy for the next 24 hours. Anything less than 4 successes is a failure and leave Sally in the grip of her autonomic programming.

ATTACKS

- UNARMED STRIKE: STR + Unarmed (TN 11),**
4 Physical damage
- BOARD: STR + Melee Weapons (TN 13),**
6 Physical damage, Two-Handed
- PIPE BOLT-ACTION RIFLE: AGI + Small Guns (TN 8),**
5 Piercing Physical damage, Range M, Fire Rate 0, Two-Handed, Unreliable

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- BARBARIAN:** +2 to Physical and Energy damage resistances (included).
- IMMUNE TO RADIATION:** The super mutant reduces all Radiation damage suffered to 0 and cannot suffer any damage or effects from radiation.
- IMMUNE TO POISON:** The super mutant reduces all Poison damage suffered to 0 and cannot suffer any damage or effects from poison.

INVENTORY

Pipe Bolt-Action Rifle, Board, Super Mutant Helmet, Super Mutant Leg Guards x2, assorted human bones, Wealth 1



SECRET MANIPULATION

As the PCs continue to investigate the conflict between the NCR and the Zetans, they may discover evidence implicating the Legion's involvement. If they have cause to look into it, they gain the Secret Manipulation quest.

The PCs may discover evidence that the Legion is involved in the conflict, using the tensions between the NCR and the Zetans to weaken their enemies.

Private Mark Aurelius is a member of Sergeant Jackson's unit, but his true loyalty lies with the Legion and its mission to conquer the Mojave. He sees the conflict in Skull Canyon as an opportunity to sow chaos and weaken the NCR's hold on the region. If the PCs can uncover Mark's true identity, they may be able to turn the tables on the Legion's plans and gain an advantage in the final showdown.

Act Three

THE FINAL SHOWDOWN



SYNOPSIS

In Act Three, the Player Characters must choose a side, whether it's supporting the New California Republic, aligning with the Zetans, remaining neutral, or perhaps of the Legion (see *Secret Manipulation*, p. 23). These choices lead them to a dramatic showdown, where they fight alongside their chosen faction. Ultimately, their actions determine the fate of Skull Canyon and reveal the true nature of the Zetans to the Mojave Wasteland.

Over the course of Act Three, players have the opportunity to:

CHOOSING SIDES

Regardless of which faction the PCs choose to support, they find themselves in the midst of a final showdown in Skull Canyon. The conflict takes place across several fronts, including the canyon itself, the Zetan laboratory, and the outskirts of the canyon.

If the PCs choose to support the NCR, they must work alongside the Rangers to apprehend or eliminate the Zetans. If the PCs choose to support the Zetans, they must fight alongside them to defend their home from the NCR's aggression. If the PCs choose to remain neutral, they must navigate a delicate balancing act between the two factions. They may attempt to mediate the conflict, gather information from both sides and try to find a peaceful resolution.

- Choose a side in the Showdown at Skull Canyon.
- Have a final battle in Skull Canyon at the sides of their chosen faction.
- Rescue Sally Jessup from her mental bondage.
- Expose the Zetans for what they really are.



THE BATTLE OF SKULL CANYON

Regardless of the PCs' choice of allies, the conflict in Skull Canyon comes to a head in a dramatic showdown between the NCR and the Zetans. This could be an intense negotiation that succeeds with all leaving able to accept the agreement or it could boil over into the Battle of Skull Canyon. The battle may take place in the canyon itself, amidst the makeshift homes and alien technology, or in a nearby location that has strategic significance, depending on who is assaulting who.

Regardless of whether the PCs are on the side of the Zetans or the NCR, they must complete an Extended Test (see *Fallout Gamemaster's Toolkit*, p. 4) that dictates the course of the first assault and later skirmishes.

■ **Effort:** 20

■ **Breakthroughs Required:** 4 (5 if there are more than four PCs)

■ **Resistance:** 2

■ **Base Test Difficulty:** 2

Ask each of the players how their character helped set up the defenses in the canyon outskirts or facilitate the attack on the town. Each skill test attempt takes roughly fifteen minutes to complete. A failed test results in lost time for the PCs and their allies, giving valuable time for enemy reinforcements such as the NCR troopers getting through to the town or more Zetans rallying to the canyon's defense. The number of attempts it takes to achieve the breakthroughs dictates the number of reinforcements during *Encounter 3B: Final Confrontation* (page 26).

Possible Skills:

- **AGI + Small Guns:** The PCs check and ready their weapons for the impending battle.
- **INT + Survival:** The PCs utilize the natural terrain to fortify defenses or gain a tactical advantage.
- **INT + Explosives:** The PCs may attempt to set traps or explosives along the terrain.

When the PCs achieve all breakthroughs, their preparations are complete, and the Battle for Skull Canyon commences!

The PCs may lay traps or set up hazards such as frag mines or falling debris (see *Fallout: The Roleplaying Game*, p. 39).

ENCOUNTER 3A: SKULL CANYON TOWN ASSAULT

The town becomes a battleground, with factions engaged in fierce combat amidst the makeshift homes and civilian vendors.

The town of Skull Canyon is engulfed in chaos as the Battle of Skull Canyon rages on. Gunfire echoes through the narrow streets, and plumes of smoke rise into the sky. The air crackles with energy as Zetan soldiers clad in advanced armor and wielding alien weaponry clash with NCR Rangers, their shots illuminating the darkness. The ground trembles beneath your feet as a twinjaw rattler slithers through the wreckage, its hissing adding to the cacophony of war. Above it all, the enigmatic figure of Zetan scientist Nok stands, surrounded by an energy field that distorts the air around him. Sparks fly from his weapon as he unleashes blasts of devastating energy, his cold, unfeeling gaze fixed on his enemies.

Both forces clash, and the PCs fight alongside their allies' forces.

The Zetans' forces include **twenty Zetans** and an armored **twinjaw rattler** drone controlled by **Nok** adorned with an **Inertia Suppression Field**.

The NCR forces consist of **Sergeant Thompson's NCR Ranger unit** (see *The Ranger Unit*, p. 13) and **five Protectrons**.

The encounter ends when either side's forces are reduced by half.

Skull Canyon Zetan

Level 5, Mutated Reptile,
Normal Creature (45 XP)

| BODY | MIND | MELEE | GUNS | OTHER |
|---|-----------|------------|-----------|---------|
| 7 | 5 | — | 4 | 2 |
| HP | | INITIATIVE | | DEFENSE |
| 15 | | 12 | | 1 |
| PHYS. DR | ENERGY DR | RAD. DR | POISON DR | |
| 1 (All) | 3 (All) | 0 | 0 | |
| ATTACKS | | | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">.44 PISTOL: BODY + Guns (TN 11), 6 Physical damage, Range C, Fire Rate 1 | | | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">ASSAULT RIFLE: BODY + Guns (TN 11), 5 Burst Physical damage, Range M, Fire Rate 2, Two-Handed | | | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">LASER GUN: BODY + Guns (TN 11), 4 Piercing Energy damage, Range C, Fire Rate 2, Reliable | | | | |
| SPECIAL ABILITIES | | | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">NONE | | | | |
| INVENTORY | | | | |
| .44 Pistol, Assault Rifle or Laser Gun, 2d20 5.56mm Rounds or Power Cells | | | | |

ENCOUNTER 3B: FINAL CONFRONTATION

The final confrontation takes place in the heart of Skull Canyon, with the fate of the Zetans and the region hanging in the balance.

The final confrontation takes place in the heart of Skull Canyon. Canyon walls reach 80 feet on each side with storefronts and homes at ground level in the canyon and multilevel construction in the canyon walls with windows and balconies on the 2nd and 3rd floors. Vehicles, merchant stalls, and storage crates line the edges of the canyon leaving an open area at the joining of two canyons into one—plenty of room for a battle.

If the PCs sided with the Zetans, read or paraphrase:

The NCR onslaught has pushed you and the Zetan defenders into the heart of Skull Canyon despite your prepared defenses. You find yourselves surrounded by a group of battle-hardened NCR Rangers. The tension in the air is palpable as each side prepares for the final confrontation. Private Mark Aurelius, armed with a sword, stands at the ready, his eyes focused and his grip tight. Specialist Granger, a seasoned sniper, scans the area, her finger itching on the trigger. Corporal Thompson grips a powerful minigun, its barrels spinning ominously. And at the forefront of the NCR forces stands Sergeant Jackson, encased in Power Armor with a resolute expression, prepared to lead his troops into battle. The fate of Skull Canyon rests on your shoulders as you prepare to face off against these formidable NCR Rangers.

INERTIA SUPPRESSION FIELD

| ITEM | DAMAGE RESISTANCES | | | LOCATIONS COVERED | WEIGHT | COST | RARITY |
|---------------------------|--------------------|--------|-----------|-------------------|--------|------|--------|
| | Physical | Energy | Radiation | | | | |
| Inertia Suppression Field | 3 | 3 | — | All | <1 | 300 | 4 |

The Zetans have made significant advancements in their personal shield technology. When equipped these shields emit a subtle luminescence, surrounded by an aura of light distortion.

The PCs face off against the surviving NCR Ranger unit (see *The Ranger Unit*, p. 13).

Depending on the number of attempts that exceeded the breakthroughs from the Extended Test at the start of the battle, add the following reinforcements to the enemy's forces:

- **1 round:** 0
- **2-3 rounds:** two NCR troopers
- **4+ rounds:** four NCR Troopers

If the PCs sided with the NCR, read or paraphrase:

As the dust settles and the chaos subsides, you find yourselves face to face with the Zetans' leader, Xarn, in the heart of Skull Canyon. Surrounding Xarn are his loyal followers, including Sally Jessup, who has thrown off any semblance of humanity as a Zetan experiment and two alien abominations and their master alien abomination. The air crackles with energy as the PCs prepare for the final confrontation. Xarn stands tall, protected by a shimmering field of force. In his hand, he wields an Alien disintegrator, its glowing energy pulsating with deadly intent in his other drone controller commanding Sally. The fate of Skull Canyon hangs in the balance as you prepare to engage in the ultimate battle against the Zetans and their leader.

The remaining Zetan forces consist of **Sally Jessup** controlled via drone by **Xarn** wearing an **inertia suppression field** and three **alien abominations** (see p. 26).

Depending on the number of attempts that exceeded the breakthroughs from the Extended Test at the start of the battle, add the following reinforcements to the enemy's forces:

- **1 round:** 0
- **2-3 rounds:** two Zetans
- **4+ rounds:** four Zetans



CONCLUSION

After the conflict is resolved, the PCs have the opportunity to reveal the true nature of the Zetans to the Mojave Wasteland sparking new debates about the role of extraterrestrial life in the post-apocalyptic world.

Depending on the PCs' choices throughout the adventure, the conclusion may involve a peaceful resolution between the NCR and the aliens, the extermination of one or both factions, or a new era of understanding and cooperation in the Mojave Wasteland.

- If the Zetans are either driven out of Skull Canyon or are exterminated the NCR strengthens its hold on the region and gains more resources. The PCs may receive recognition and rewards from the NCR. If the NCR emerges victorious, they may enforce stricter security measures to prevent further threats, which could limit the PCs' access to the region. The extermination of the Zetans could be seen as a moral and ethical issue, and the PCs may face backlash from factions who disapprove of the NCR's actions. The recognition and rewards from the NCR could also attract unwanted attention and place the PCs in the crosshairs of other factions.

- If the Zetans defeat the NCR with the help of the PCs the NCR suffers a major setback and loses control of Skull Canyon. The Zetans may become more aggressive and begin expanding their influence in the region. The PCs may gain access to the Zetans' advanced technology. If the Zetans are victorious, they may become overconfident and underestimate potential future threats, potentially leading to their downfall. The NCR may respond with greater force, potentially leading to an all-out war in the region. The PCs may have to confront their own values and allegiances if they choose to side with a non-human faction.

- If the Players somehow broker a tentative truce or a diplomatic relationship between the NCR and the Zetans the conflict in Skull Canyon is resolved peacefully, but tensions between the two factions persist. The PCs may gain the respect and trust of both factions. The truce may be fragile and could break down if certain conditions are not met or could be tested by outside forces. The fragile truce may require the PCs to maintain a delicate balance between the two factions, potentially limiting their freedom to act. If tensions continue to persist, the PCs may be called upon to act as mediators between the two groups or between them and third parties, potentially placing them in danger. Diplomacy could also inspire other factions to seek peace, potentially leading to larger-scale diplomacy and negotiations in the region.

FALLOUT

After the quest is completed, several opportunities for further development relating to Skull Canyon and beyond.

- The Legion:** If the NCR defeats the Zetans with the help of the PCs, the Legion may view this as a missed opportunity to weaken the NCR and may become more aggressive in their efforts to do so. If the Zetans defeat the NCR with the help of the PCs, the Legion may see this as an opportunity to weaken the NCR's position in the Mojave and may target them for further attacks. If the Players broker a truce or create a diplomatic relationship between the NCR and the Zetans, the Legion may still view the NCR as a significant threat and may continue to seek ways to undermine them. If the Legion's involvement is exposed, they may become more isolated and lose favor with potential allies in the region.

Quest Rewards

For completing *Showdown in Skull Canyon*, the PCs receive 20 Caps per player to split between them if they were hired by the mutants/Sally or switched sides to the NCR. Depending on the outcome, they may be friendly with the NCR or the Zetans. Either way, if their side won the final confrontation the PCs are given access to the alien technology, each PC can choose an item available worth 50 Caps or less with a Rarity of 3 or less. In addition, the PCs receive full access to the facilities of Skull Canyon and can request medical services and purchase surplus tech supplies at a 25% discount. If they also complete the *Secret Manipulation* quest, they receive another 20 Caps each in addition to the 15 already received, and the aforementioned discount increases to 50%.

However, if their side did not win, they do not get any monetary or other considerations and just have to chalk it all up to a lesson learned. Each PC receives 400 XP for completing *Showdown in Skull Canyon* and 60 XP if they complete *Secret Manipulation*.